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An Essay

on

Progressive Medicine.

Respectfully Submitted

To the Faculty of the

Homoeopathic Medical College

of Pennsylvania.

on the

Twenty Fourth day of January

one thousand eight hundred & fifty three.

by

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of Ohio.



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Before the prevailing practice of medicine  
"Allopathy" can be done away with, and the  
system of cure founded on the immutable law  
"Similia Similibus Curantur" uniformly intro-  
duced which is at variance with established  
usage in direct antagonism with the gener-  
al habits, customs, education, and prejudices  
of the people, in utter contempt of the teach-  
ings and practices of great and venerable  
names, and opposed to the pride, interest,  
reputation, and even conscientious convictions  
of a learned, honorable, and influential  
profession the intelligent portion of the  
community will demand reasons the most  
profound and evidences the most conclusive,  
while the illiterate will require an accumu-  
lation of facts and evidences absolutely over-  
whelming. The philosophy of life and



Health, the laws of the human organism, and its relations to the Law of Cure, as discovered by Hahnemann, have been, in my judgment, already sufficiently demonstrated to satisfy the intellectual minds of the former class, and their applications to the preservation of health and cure of disease amply demonstrated by actual experience for the exercise of the faith of the latter class.

The increase and multiplication of population, the varied and different pursuits and arts, the modes and habits of life and all the numerous and varied forms of action and manifestations of human effort and power, of human thought and hope, the passions, the desires, the taste, the form of government, the system of morals,



indeed, all that man is, has been, or can be, must be looked to, by those who assume to discover, and search after the secrets of preserving human life and health.

Thus, it may be assumed, and is demonstrated, that, whatever affects the physical condition of man, whether of a physical or moral nature, if continued, produces a constitutional modification of the system, and requires a like modification and progression in the science of medicine. The science of medicine must then grow with man's growth, and expand with man's expansion, and progress with progression, and never become perfect, until man himself becomes perfect, in knowledge and obedience to the laws of nature, and assumes his true and exact



position to the relations, which he holds to all things else. True progress can only be made, in the Science of Medicine, by close and constant study, and comprehension of the Laws of Nature.

To guide and direct the progress of medicine is, Study Nature. Study man, Study human development; acquaint ourselves with the Laws, and effects of progress; there are difficulties, however, which stand in the way of true progress, which it were well to observe.

The great Law of Nature is "infinite dissimilarity in similarity." No two human faces are alike, no two human constitutions are alike, no two leaves of the tree are alike, and yet they are all alike. Individuality is overlooked in generality, and the individual



peculiarity is too often wholly overlooked.

The disease of the individual, is often found, in the individual peculiarity. To find general principles, which will control the individual peculiarity, is difficult if not impossible; and perhaps, it can never be done, and must be left to particular determination in each case; and can only be reached by a modification, and combination of general principles, to suit the individual difference. But if this be so, let that be regarded in the general law, and we have made just so much advance. The most common, and indeed the ordinary and general notion of medical effort, is directed and regarded to be confined to the physical system, to be operated upon by physical means.



it is not only a common notion entertained among men generally, but exists, and is entertained among men claiming to be skilled in the medical science, that disease is the result of physical cause, and must be wholly controlled by physical means.

The notion is defective in this, that it only embraces the one half of the man, and that part of him too, which least of all makes him a man, and which at least, is the more material instrument of the soul. Man is a compounded being, made up of body and soul. The soul appears to be the principle of vitality, as human life cannot continue <sup>without</sup> it; the health and manifestations of both, appears to, and does depend upon the health of each. If the body is defective or diseased,



The manifestations of the mind are also defective and diseased. Strong affections or passions of the mind and soul, operate upon and affect the body. Indeed so powerfull, do passions and actions of the mind, operate upon the body, as not only to obstruct its functions, and produce unhealthy action, but oftentimes destroy it altogether, and produce death.

Everything which proceeds from man, or acts upon man, affects him, and this embraces all the relations which man holds to all things.

The system of medicine, then cannot be condemned as useless because imperfect because as yet no science is perfect. But in another sense from this general imperfection which attaches to the science of medicine, in common with all other departments



of Science, it has been confined to too narrow limits. And matters have been excluded, or disregarded, or passed too lightly over which come directly within the object and study of medicine.

Those who regard the Science of Medicine, as simply confined to those physical means which produce physical results upon the body, forget or disregard the influences which the mind, the passions and feelings exert upon the vital system. Let the imagination and firm belief on the part of a man, that he was bleeding to death, has produced the same results, as the lancet with the same symptoms, although not a drop of blood was lost.

The imagination then, may produce, and will produce, precisely the same



effect as the Sunsets if properly appeared to. True these things have been known; but I insist, that in the practice of medicine, and the science itself, this great fact occupies too low a place.

Yet it must be admitted, that physical means being the most apparent, and the symptoms of disease being manifested in physical results; the influences which mind produces as a cause or cure of disease in a thousand of its manifestations, is either wholly overlooked, or too slightly regarded. Hence, I have insisted, that the system of medicine should be as wide as man; and that the mind, and passions and affections, should receive more attention in the action which they produce, upon the nervous and vital



System, and consequently, upon the whole animal functions. But this will more fully manifest itself, in looking at the other causes of the imperfection in the system of medicine; which is, that the science of medicine is and must in the very nature of things, be progressive. I am not contending, that there is nothing fixed or certain in the science of medicine. But that the administration of remedies in accordance with the great Law of Cure "Similia Similibus" should be constantly perfected. The Law being fixed, it remains now, to perfect the administration of remedies in harmony with the Law.

To settle the question, whether the science of medicine must be progressive, requires but a short process of reasoning.



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Medicine is the cure of disease; hence the Science of Medicine must follow disease, in whatever form it may assume, or whatever new disease may spring up. Now it is a fact, that no intelligent man will deny, but all admit, that new diseases do arise, and old ones assume new forms and types requiring entirely new and different modes of treatment. This arises from a peculiar condition of the body, or from change and subtle influences. Hence the Science of Medicine must progress to keep pace with disease. But I choose to place this upon another ground, which will disclose the cause to some extent, of this change and modification of disease. I wish to show, that it springs from Laws within our own nature, and results from the



development of man. It is true, that chan-  
 ges may be produced in the physical  
 world, resulting from changes too remote and  
 subtle to be discerned, and which perhaps,  
 can never be ascertained, which will produce  
 entirely new disease. Who can tell whe-  
 ther modern influences, such as magnetic  
 electricity, or attraction, may not operate  
 upon our earth, and its elements from  
 planets lying beyond the range of telescopic  
 observation. It is a question too, whether  
 there are not numerous agents, for aught  
 we know, powerfull and effective, directly  
 around us, too subtle to be detected by the  
 senses, and too delicate to be indicated  
 by any instrument, which the ingenuity of  
 man has, or perhaps can devise, or living  
 by any possible means to the observation



of the senses. Laying aside all such inquiry as this; although the fearful and strange maladies, which have often scourged humanity, and swept the earth with the mow of death, and eluded all discovery of the causes, induce us to believe, that such influences do exist. And we have within our reach a fruitfull source of inquiry based upon principles and facts, which may be clearly discerned and demonstrated, that disease keeps pace with the progress of the race.

This may be illustrated and demonstrated in the very nature and structure of man himself.

The proposition for the progress of the science of medicine, is limited to the changes and principles which operate and effect change in man himself, who is the object, and upon whom,



the whole science of medicine is directed.

The science of medicine must partake of the defects and ignorances of all other branches of science, and consequently must progress with the general advance, and growth of all sciences.

And as the qualities, and virtues, of every variety of matter, of whatever form and organization, are more fully developed and understood, their effects upon human system will be better comprehended, and in this way remedial agents undoubtedly will be better understood, old remedies will come to be better understood, and different combinations, and different applications, will be discovered, and their true symptoms obtained, in the healthy organism. The cause and diagnosis of disease will also be more accurately traced, and be more thoroughly understood and



appreciated. But such improvements although certain to take place, confines the progress of medicine to the multiplication of remedies and their skillfull application, under a fuller knowledge of the virtue of various remedies, and the discovery of new ones.

Guided by a more accurate knowledge of symptoms, and disease, in this respect the science of medicine must progress. But the progression in the science to which I design to call more particular attention, results from those changes which are operating upon man himself, and produced by moral causes, such as "civilization, Government, Religion, and the whole train of developments, attendant upon progressive and cultivated society.

I have before stated, that man is a compound of soul and body; that they



resulting from irritability of the nervous  
 system, as well as mutual and  
 relative action upon each other. The  
 brain and nervous system are the instruments  
 of the soul, the seat of thought and sensation.  
 Whatever acts upon the brain, or nervous system,  
 to develop, modify, or affect it, must and  
 does act upon the whole man. If the  
 physical system in any department of it,  
 undergoes change or modification, to that,  
 and in that mode, it affects disease or  
 health, and must in the same way affect  
 medical inquiry.

In the early condition of mankind,  
 when man's wants were few, and their  
 modes of life simple, diseases were few  
 and simple, and generally of an inflammatory  
 and violent character. Those ten thousand  
 affections and complications of disease



resulting from irritability of the nervous system, which awaits upon a more refined and artificial state of society were unknown.

A science of medicine which would be suited to a rude and uncultivated condition of mankind, would be ineffective and unsuited to a greater state of advancement.

My theory then is. That every new development of mind, feeling, and sympathy, or taste; that every form, change, or modification of religion; that every science, art, or pursuit; that every mode of life; that every habit or indulgence, effects, modifies or changes disease, and gives rise to new and different diseases; hence to the same extent and <sup>in</sup> the same way, affects the practice of medicine.